DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 332 939 SO 030 142

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TITLE China in a World Cultures Social Studies Curriculum: A Guide for Teachers.
INSTITUTION Columbia Univ., New York, N.Y. East Asian Inst.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-913418-13-7
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 41p.; For related documents, see ED 323 133, SO 030 086, SO 030 140-144, and SO 030 151-152.
AVAILABLE FROM East Asian Curriculum Project, Columbia University, East Asian
PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Directories/Catalogs (132) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Audiovisual Aids; *Audiovisual Instruction; *Curriculum Development; *Educational Resources; Foreign Countries; *Global Approach; Grade 9; Instructional Materials; Secondary Education; *Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS *China; *Heart of the Dragon

ABSTRACT

The goal of the East Asian Curriculum Project (EACP) of Columbia University is to support education on Asia at the secondary and elementary levels. The project has developed a variety of curriculum resources and collaborated with state and local educators in designing units about Asia for teachers. Each packet contains brief resource lists along with the locations and names of resource centers dealing with each country or area. This document follows the New York Schools curriculum for the ninth grade and is based on a four-week unit of 15-20 class lessons focusing on six themes: (1) national identity and China's cultural tradition; (2) agriculture and population--the agrarian dilemma in China's modernization; (3) family and state--patterns of hierarchy and paternalism; (4) the perfectibility of man and the moral role of government; (5) relationship between the individual and society; and (6) predominance of commercial over industrial development. The subjects covered are: (1) the physical/historical setting of China; (2) dynamics of change (modernization); (3) contemporary China; (4) economic development in China; and (5) China in global context. A timeline and maps also are included. This document is based on a television documentary series on China, "The Heart of the Dragon," originally presented on public television. (NL)

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CENTRAL THEMES FOR A UNIT ON

CHINA

IN A WORLD CULTURES SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

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CENTRAL THEMES

for a unit on

CHINA

IN A WORLD CULTURES SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

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This publication was made possible by grants from the United States Department of Education. The East Asian Curriculum Project remains solely responsible for its contents.

Design motifs used in the text are from *Traditional Chinese Designs*, edited by Stanley Applebaum, and published by Dover Publications.

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ISBN 0-913418-13-7

EA CP East Asian Curriculum Project
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CHINA THEMES

The themes are distinctive, and recurrent, so that they are touched on again and again under different categories, until a portrait of cultural difference is accumulated. Of the many possible themes, six are suggested here as illustrative of Chinese culture and its relation to the world.

1. National Identity and China's Cultural Tradition
2. Agriculture and Population: The Agrarian Dilemma in China's Modernization
3. Family and State: Patterns of Hierarchy and Paternalism
4. The Perfectibility of Man and the Moral Role of Government
5. Relationship between the Individual and Society
6. Predominance of Commercial over Industrial Development

INTRODUCTION TO THEMES

1. National Identity and China's Cultural Tradition

China is one of the world's oldest civilizations and the dominant cultural center of East Asia; with flourishing philosophical, political, economic, artistic and scientific traditions, it developed a strong identity as a universalistic civilization. For the last century it has been faced with the challenge of forging a new identity and of redefining its cultural values in a modern world.

2. Agriculture and Population: The Agrarian Dilemma in China's Modernization

China's economy has traditionally depended on wet rice agriculture, a seasonally labor-intensive method of cultivation, with the farmer's family as the source of labor. A Chinese peasant could best raise his standard of living by having many children and buying more land with whatever extra income they could produce, a system that provided neither the incentive for modernization nor surplus for the state. Collectivized agriculture was introduced in the 1950s but proved to be unsatisfactory, and as part of the reforms of the 1980s, farming was once again contracted to individual families. While successful in raising output, it works against the state's other goals of modernization and population control.

3. Family and State: Patterns of Hierarchy and Paternalism

The Confucian philosophy, holding that the correct ordering of hierarchical relationships within the family was key to the ordering of society in general, was reflected in all aspects of life. Modeled on the family, government was characterized by rule of man, not law; rule by moral example; and rule by personal rather than official authority. These cultural patterns and assumptions continue to influence the political system and shape popular expectations of the role of government and of relationships in work units, schools, and other institutions.

4. The Perfectibility of Man and the Moral Role of Government

The dominant strain of Confucian thought stressed the perfectibility of man, through self-cultivation, education, and the practice of ritual. One of the government's main functions was to educate and transform the people. The belief that the state is the moral guardian of the people and that men are perfectible is reflected in Chinese institutions: historically in the merit bureaucracy and more recently in the style of Communist party leadership.

5. Relationship between the Individual and Society

Because the relationship between the individual and the state is understood in consensual terms, China did not develop an elaborate system of civil law. Mediation rather than litigation was stressed. Neo-Confucian ideals also held that it was the responsibility of the educated individual to serve the state and the society.

6. *Predominance of Commercial over Industrial Development*

China's geographical and political unity fostered the development of an intricate market network, where the absence of trade barriers over a vast and geographically varied region and a huge, regionally diverse population meant China was never obliged to develop labor-saving mechanisms or to engage in expansionist or colonizing activities. As a consequence, its lack of industrial development put China at a disadvantage militarily and economically when faced with foreign encroachment in the 1800s, and industrial development has been a priority since that time. The reemergence under the reforms of the 1980s of the traditional market system has greatly facilitated economic growth.

SECTIONS
following the NYS Curriculum for the 9th Grade

Time suggestions based on a four-week unit of 15-20 class lessons

I The Physical/Historical Setting of China

Suggested time: 6-7 lessons

1. Ancient Civilization and Dominant Cultural Center
2. Agriculture and Population
3. Family and State
4. The Perfectibility of Man and the Moral Role of Government
5. Individual and Society
6. Legalism and a Strong State
7. Advanced Commercial Development in Place of Industrial Development

II Dynamics of Change -- Modernization

Suggested time: 4-5 lessons

1. China before the Modern Era
2. China in the 18th and 19th Centuries, at the time of European Expansion
3. The West in China
4. China's Response to Western and Japanese Imperialism
5. Revolution and War

III Contemporary China

Suggested time: 4-6 lessons

1. China since 1949
2. Maoist Policies
3. Policy Changes Since Mao
4. Agrarian Policy and Economic Development
5. The Family and State in China Today
6. The Individual and the Group
6. State and Society: Democracy and Centralism
7. China's Cultural Identity: Defining What it Means to be Chinese

IV Economic Development in China

This section is not given a separate status. Instead, economic issues are integrated into each of the topical headings.

V China in Global Context

Suggested time: 1-2 lessons

Appendix: Timeline and Maps

LESSONS AND TOPICS

I THE PHYSICAL/HISTORICAL SETTING OF CHINA

[Suggested time: 6-7 lessons]

1. Ancient Civilization and Dominant Cultural Center

A. Chinese civilization is one of the ***world's oldest continuous civilizations***. Civilization developed in China from earliest times in the ***valleys of three major rivers***, the Huang He (Yellow River), the Chang Jiang (Yangtze), and the Xi Jiang (West River). These river systems, running west-east, have shaped agricultural development and population growth throughout China's history (THEME 1). The Chinese coastline and the Grand Canal (first constructed in 605 A.D.) were important for providing north-south communication, furthering unification of the country and mitigating the regionalism fostered by the intersection of mountain chains.

B. Mountains and deserts in the west of China ***limited its contact with other major centers of civilization in the Middle East and South Asia***. Elements of Chinese civilization – literary Chinese and its writing system, Confucian thought, and Buddhism (in forms developed and refined in China after its origination in India) – dominated the high culture of East Asia, creating a cultural sphere that encompassed what are today Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. China's traditional self-image was as a cultural center of the world. Zhongguo, which we pronounce "China" in English, means Middle Kingdom or Central Kingdom. (THEME 1). The Chinese thought of their culture as universalistic, that is, outsiders could join or become assimilated into it. This strong ***identity as a universalistic civilization*** has been an important unifying factor throughout China's history, even during times when the country was divided (THEME 1). The Chinese ***written language***, which transcends dialects, has also been an important element fostering China's cultural unity throughout history.

C. China was unified by its first emporer, Qin Shi Huangdi (Ch'in Shih Huang-ti), who established the Qin (Ch'in) dynasty in 221 B.C. Consolidated under the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-222 A.D.), the empire was comparable in dates, size, and strength with the Roman Empire. The Roman and Chinese empires traded through intermediaries on an overland route through Central Asia; Chinese silk was an especially prized commodity in Rome.

D. Poetry, fine porcelain, calligraphy, landscape painting, philosophy, political thought, historical writing, scientific advances in astronomy, chemistry, and medicine, and the production of fine silks and teas all flourished in China from earliest times, but particularly during the 7th to 12th centuries, China's "***golden age***," under the Tang and Sung (Song) dynasties (THEME 1).

2. Agriculture and Population

A. China's economy depended traditionally on ***wet rice agriculture***, most particularly in southern and central China, where the climate and soil support two and sometimes three growing cycles a year. (Wheat is the staple crop in north China, but due both to the nature of the crop and the climate, the output per field is lower than that of rice.)

B. In wet rice agriculture, seeds are sown in small seedbeds; the seedlings are then transplanted one by one to prepared paddy fields. While the plants are maturing, they must be kept irrigated, but as the rice ripens the fields are drained. The rice is then harvested and threshed by hand. ***Wet rice agriculture is labor-intensive*** (as is the cultivation of silk worms and tea) (THEME 2). Labor is particularly important when the fields are prepared, seedlings transplanted, and again when the rice is harvested. At these times,

increasing the size of the labor force can significantly increase the productivity of each field. In some areas a farmer can increase productivity by double or triple cropping, a technique that requires even greater concentrations of labor, because the harvesting of one crop and the transplanting of the next crop occur virtually simultaneously. At other times during the winter or while the rice is maturing, the demand for labor is greatly diminished. Traditionally, Chinese farmers, ***with their families as their labor force***, put everyone to work in the field when labor was needed (THEME 3). During slack periods, women and younger children could do other work for the family, including handicraft production.

C. ***Traditional agricultural methods and population growth were thus closely related.*** As output increased, population increased to the extent it could be supported; as population increased, the added labor led to increased production. ***The more workers available to help in the field, the more rice one field could produce, so it was to a family's advantage to have many sons*** (since daughters married out of the family, they generally were not considered assets). High infant mortality and the reliance of aged parents on their children for support reinforced the ideal of the large family. At the same time, ***the larger the family, the more rice the farm had to produce in order to feed them.*** Consequently, the best chance a Chinese peasant had to improve his life was to have a large family, intensify the family effort to cultivate rice, then use whatever extra income they were able to produce to buy more land until he owned just as much land as the whole family, working together, could farm at maximum productivity (THEME 2). In a minority of cases, even more land might be purchased for rental to tenants.

3. Family and State

Government and society in China were grounded in the Confucian philosophy, which held that there was a basic order in the universe and a ***natural harmony linking man, nature, and the cosmos (heaven)***; it also held that man was by nature a social being, and that the natural order of the universe should be reflected in human relations. The family unit was seen as the primary social unit; relationships within the family were fundamental to all others and comprised three of the "five relationships" that were the models for all others: sovereign-subject; husband-wife; parent-child; elder brother-younger brother; friend-friend. In this hierarchy of social relations, each role had clearly defined duties; reciprocity or mutual responsibility between subordinate and superior was fundamental to the Confucian concept of human relations. The virtue of ***filial piety***, or devotion of the child to his parents, was the foundation for all others. When extended to all human beings, it nurtured the highest virtue, ***humaneness (jen), or the sense of relatedness to other persons*** (THEME 3).

Family

A. In traditional Chinese society, therefore, the family, not the group or the individual, was central. The kinship network linked ***related families*** and also the living with the deceased through ***veneration of ancestors***.

B. ***The eldest male held supreme authority within the family*** (THEME 3); the status of females was unequal. Property was owned jointly by males and passed on to males equally. Emphasis was on the paternal line of ancestors; great importance was attached to honoring these ancestors to ensure the continuity and prosperity of the family. Marriages were arranged by families.

C. Because of the strong sense of identification between an individual and his family and the idea of mutual responsibility, population registration, taxation, and self-policing were carried out for the government not by individuals but by families grouped, for administrative efficiency, into larger units under the ***bao-jia (pao-chia)*** system. Families and neighbors were responsible for mutual surveillance.

State

D. In traditional China it was assumed by adherents of all schools of thought that government would be ***monarchial*** and that ***the state had its model in the family*** (THEME 3). The ruler was understood to be at once the Son of Heaven, and the father of the people, ruling under the Mandate of Heaven. Traditional thinkers, reflecting on the problem of government, were concerned primarily not with changing institutions and laws but with ensuring the moral uprightness of the ruler and encouraging his appropriate conduct as a father-figure (THEME 3). The magistrate, the chief official of the lowest level of government and the official closest to the people, was known as the "father-mother" official. Even today, under a radically different form of government, the Chinese term for state is ***guo-jia*** or ***"nation-family," suggesting the survival of the idea of this paternal and consensual relationship*** (THEMES 3 and 5). The first and third of the "five relationships" – i.e., emperor and minister, father and son – indicate the parallels between family and state.

E. The notion of the ***role of the state as guarantor of the people's welfare*** developed very early, along with the monarchy and the bureaucratic state. It was also assumed that good government could bring about order, peace, and the good society (THEMES 3 and 5). Tests of the good ruler were social stability, population growth (a reflection of ancient statecraft where the good ruler was one who could attract people from other states), and ability to create conditions that fostered the people's welfare. The ***Mandate of Heaven*** was understood as justifying the right to rule, with the corollary right to rebel against a ruler who did not fulfill his duties to the people. The state played a major role in determining water rights, famine control and relief, and insuring social stability. The state encouraged people to grow rice and other grains rather than commercial crops in order to insure an adequate food supply; it held reserves in state granaries, in part to lessen the effects of drought and floods, particularly common in northern China. For fear of losing the Mandate of Heaven governments levied very low taxes which often meant that the government could not provide all the services expected of it, and that officials ended up extorting money from the people.

4. The Perfectibility of Man and the Moral Role of Government

A. The dominant strain of Confucian thought stressed the ***perfectibility of man*** (THEME 4). Confucius (a political philosopher who lived c. 551-479 B.C.) expressed a belief in the fundamental similarity of all persons and in the perfectibility and educability of each individual. Mencius and Hsun Tzu, two of his prominent successors, held different views on human nature, Mencius arguing that it contained the seeds of goodness, and Hsun Tzu that, in its uncultivated state, human nature tended to evil. Both, however, believed that human beings were perfectible through ***self-cultivation*** and the ***practice of ritual*** (THEME 4). From the 11th century onward, Neo-Confucian philosophers, engaged in the renewal and elaboration of Confucian thought, subscribed to the Mencian line, stressing the potential goodness of human nature and the importance of developing that goodness through ***education***.

B. Belief in the innate goodness and perfectibility of man has had strong implications for the development of the Chinese political system. ***The ruler's main function in the Confucian state was to educate and transform the people*** (THEME 4). This was ideally accomplished not by legal regulation and coercion, but by ***personal rule, moral example***, and ***mediation*** in disputes by the emperor and his officials. Confucian political theory emphasized conflict resolution through mediation, rather than through the application of abstract rules to establish right and wrong in order to achieve social harmony.

C. The belief that the state was the moral guardian of the people was reflected in a number of institutions. Most important among these was the ***merit bureaucracy***, or ***civil service***, in which all officials were to be selected for their moral qualities, qualities that would enable them not only to govern, but to set a moral example that would transform the people. Because Confucianism was a moral system, the

Confucian classics had to be mastered by prospective officials. Official position and examination degree, not wealth or business acumen, were universally recognized marks of status.

5. Individual and Society

A. The relation between the ***individual and the state*** was understood not in adversarial terms, as is characteristic of the modern West, but in ***consensual terms*** **(THEMES 3 and 5)**. Therefore, China did not develop an elaborate system of civil law. Instead, ***mediation*** between aggrieved parties was prescribed, with local leaders emphasizing negotiation, compromise, and change through education rather than assignment of blame and punishment.

B. Neo-Confucian ideals held that: 1) ***the educated individual had a responsibility to serve the state*** **(THEME 5)**; 2) a morally upright official should courageously remonstrate with the ruler if his policies are damaging to the state; 3) the state could prosper only if the people prospered; and 4) any disruption in the economy or social order was probably due to corrupt political institutions. These ideas contributed to the longevity, strength, and adaptability of traditional Chinese political institutions. The best people were motivated to serve in government. While corruption was not uncommon, the ideal of public service and responsibility for the people's welfare remained strong. A powerful ***tradition of remonstrance and reform*** helped to insure that the system adapted to change.

6. Legalism and a Strong State

A complementary philosophical strain in Chinese thought was Legalism, first applied in the short-lived dynasty of the first emperor, Qin Shi Huangdi (Ch'in Shih Huang-ti, 221-207 B.C.). Proponents of Legalism stressed an administrative approach to efficient and pragmatic government; universal and codified law rather than morality (in contrast to the Confucian emphasis); and state power as an end in itself. As first applied, Legalism proved too harsh and disruptive, but for two millenia thereafter the Chinese state combined aspects of the Legalist structure with the Confucian spirit, recognizing the effectiveness of a ***centralized, bureaucratic rule*** which could oversee massive public works, state monopolies, standardized weights, measures, and even script, attempt intellectual control, and enforce social order by suppressing revolt **(THEMES 1 and 3)**.

7. Advanced Commercial Development in Place of Industrial Development

A. Geographic unity, river systems, and canals facilitated the development of internal trade in China. The mainland forms a natural unit almost cut off by mountains from the outside world. Its size and the political unity that prevailed for much of its late imperial history promoted ***interregional trade*** within China, however **(THEME 6)**. The absence of trade barriers and the existence of a vast and varied geography meant that shortages in one part of China could be made up through trade with another. Similarly, labor needs in one area could be filled by migration or by shifting manufacture to another area. Geographic factors that facilitated this internal trade were the Yangtze River, the complex network of rivers in the south, and China's long coastline. China thus never felt pressure to develop labor-saving technologies or to engage in extensive expansionist or colonizing activities, in contrast to the West and Japan. **(This contrasts markedly with the political and economic history of Europe, where the existence of many small countries led to trade barriers and local shortages, prompting individual countries to make technological advances and wage costly wars that contributed to the rise of large financial empires, and engage in imperialism.)**

B. The Chinese state did control commercial development. Responsible for popular welfare, it emphasized the production of staple food crops; merchants were viewed as unproductive and constituted the lowest class in the traditional Confucian hierarchy. From the Tang dynasty (618-907) onward, however, with growing population and expansion of territory, state control of the economy was gradually reduced. Except for strategic goods like salt and certain metals like copper and lead needed for currency, the state did little to control commerce. **(This contrasts with European states, where cities were required to be chartered by the royal house, and with Japan, where cities were allowed to develop only in the castle towns of the daimyo and in Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo, which had special functions in the central government.)** Moreover, the Chinese government did not rely very heavily on commercial taxation; its main sources of income were land and salt taxes. **(This contrasts with Western Europe, where government taxes on commerce were heavy.)** This environment fostered the development of an ***intricate market network which extended deep into the countryside*** and which was comprised of periodic, village markets with links to regional markets **(THEME 6)**. A primitive national market, remarkable given China's vast territory, existed in certain essential commodities, such as grain, cotton, and tea. A number of factors, including China's size, the difficulties involved in conducting long-distance trade using metal currencies, and the minor role played by government in regulating the economy, help explain why China was the first country to develop paper money, sophisticated brokerage practices, and banking institutions.

II DYNAMICS OF CHANGE – MODERNIZATION

[Suggested time: 4-5 lessons]

1. China Before the Modern Era

A. China's stable social and political institutions spawned great scientific achievements, intellectual and artistic developments. The "golden age" of the Tang (618-907) and Song (Sung) (907-1127/1279) dynasties was followed by the commercial expansion and economic prosperity of the Ming (1368-1644) and early Qing (Ch'ing) (1644-1912) dynasties **(THEMES 1 and 6)**. Marco Polo, travelling to China during the Yuan dynasty when the Mongols controlled China (1279-1368, between the Song and Ming) commented with amazement on the contrast between its civilization and that of Venice, an advanced enclave in Europe at the time. His tales of the Chinese cities were dismissed as fantasy by most Europeans.

2. China in the 18th and 19th Centuries, at the Time of European Economic Expansion

A. In the 16th century, the Chinese economy was still the most sophisticated and productive in the world, and the Chinese probably enjoyed a higher standard of living than any other people on earth. The Qing (Ch'ing) or Manchu dynasty (1644-1912) continued this splendor. Contemporary Chinese called the 18th century, when all aspects of culture flourished, "unparalleled in history." China was a prosperous state with abundant natural resources, a huge but basically contented population, and a royal house of great prestige at home and abroad **(THEME 1)**.

B. Yet by the late 18th century, the strong Chinese state contained seeds of its own destruction, particularly its expanding population. Having remained at 100 million through much of history, under the peaceful Qing (Ch'ing), the population doubled from 150 million in 1650 to 300 million by 1800, and reached 450 million by the late nineteenth century (cf. population of the U.S. was 200 million in the 1980s) **(THEME 2)**. By then, there was no longer any land in China's southern and central provinces

available for migration: the introduction of New World (American) crops through trade – especially sweet potatoes, peanuts, and tobacco, which required different growing conditions than rice and wheat – had already claimed previously unusable land. With only 1/10 of the land arable, farmers had an average of only three (3) acres, with many having only one acre. The right of equal inheritance among sons (versus primogeniture as practiced in Japan) only hastened the fragmentation of land holdings. To compound these problems, the state was losing its control in much of the country. By the 19th century, district magistrates at the lowest level of the Chinese bureaucracy were responsible for the welfare, control, and taxation of an average of 250,000 people (THEME 3). This left control and responsibility for government increasingly in the hands of local leaders whose allegiances were to their localities and families, rather than to the state.

C. The traditional labor-intensive and highly productive agricultural system that prevailed throughout the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (Ch'ing) (1644-1912) periods, ***while very sophisticated, provided neither incentives to modernize nor surplus for the state***, and eventually resulted in what has been called China's "high-level equilibrium trap" (or "agricultural involution"). A Chinese peasant had little capital to invest in machinery; his fields were small enough that his family could farm them effectively with manual labor and too small to make the use of machinery profitable. Wealthy landlords who controlled properties large enough to make the use of modern agricultural technology feasible, found it more profitable to rent the land to numerous small tenant farmers, from whom they collected an average of half the harvest in rent (THEME 2). Chinese peasants thus seldom had any surplus income. Because they produced most of the goods, including handicrafts, they needed, they did not stimulate a domestic market for manufactured goods (THEME 6).

3. The West in China

A. When the industrializing European states attempted to entice China into the newly forming world economy in the late 1700s and early 1800s, their overtures were rebuffed by the Chinese, who quite rightly felt that they had little to gain from trade with these states (THEMES 1 and 6). Western military power was far superior to that of the Chinese, however, and China was defeated in a series of military confrontations and forced to sign "***unequal treaties***" that opened Chinese ports (known as "***treaty ports***"), first to European, and then to American and Japanese traders. The Chinese were further humiliated by having to relinquish legal jurisdiction over sections of these port cities and over foreigners residing in China (THEME 1). Chinese were even excluded from facilities and areas controlled by foreigners. The Chinese were also forced under the treaties to allow Western Christian missionaries to proselytize in the interior of the country. Between the first major confrontation, the Opium War of 1839-42, and the early 1900s, the British, French, Germans, Americans, and Japanese competed for "***spheres of influence***" within China until it was at risk of being "carved up like a melon."

B. When a series of natural catastrophes (especially drought and famine) and man-made disasters (especially floods from deteriorating water-control works, made worse by over-reclamation of the wetlands, lowlands, and mountain slopes that were necessary to control water runoff) hit China in the late 19th century, the weakness of the state and the disruption of the economy due to the Western presence found China unable to provide for its huge population and faced with a series of rebellion across the country (THEME 3). The Taiping (1851-1864), Nian (Nien) (1853-1868), Moslem (1855-1873), and Boxer (1898-1901) rebellions all occurred in the latter part of the 19th century; during the Taiping Rebellion, rebel forces controlled a large portion of China, and established their capital in the city of Nanjing. The power of the central government was further weakened as military power was delegated to the provinces to control these rebellions.

4. China's Response to Imperialism

A. The ability of the Western nations and then Japan to impose their economic demands on China by force of arms was ***jarring to the Chinese view of themselves as a highly developed civilization*** (THEME 1). Moreover, the Western notion of a system of international relations conducted among sovereign nation-states challenged Chinese identity as an advanced, universalistic civilization. Also, it was difficult for the Chinese, whose emperor had been recognized as the supreme authority by countries bearing tribute to the Chinese court, to adapt to the system that had evolved in Europe by the 1800s of sovereign nation-states interacting as equals. (THEME 1).

B. Much of the intellectual history of the late Qing (Ch'ing) and Republican periods (1912-1949) centers around the conflicting views within China of how it should respond. These fall roughly into three categories: 1) anti-traditionalism, which rejected the traditional claims of cultural superiority, dismissed Chinese culture as sick, corrupt, and useless, and advocated complete Westernization; 2) pro-traditionalism, which sought to completely reject any import of Western culture and to strengthen the country through reform-within-tradition and cultural revival; and 3) the idea of adopting Western technology in order to preserve the essence of Chinese civilization (***"Western learning for application, Chinese learning for essence"***) (THEME 1). The Chinese emphasis on the moral role of government, the perfectibility of man, and the belief that moral qualities and not technical expertise merited reward and ultimately benefited society, led to an unwillingness to cultivate a class of technical experts, in industry or in government (THEME 4). This was in part at the root of China's inability to repulse the military and political incursions of the West and Japan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

C. The Western view was that China was blocking the development of its market, but even after the opening of markets in China through the treaty ports, the "China Market" never developed to the extent the West had envisioned. Except for opium and machine spun cotton yarn, the West had little to offer the Chinese that they did not already make and market well (THEME 6). Western traders were also seldom able to break into the highly developed internal trading network within China. Thus, while colonial rule in this period led to the imposition of a modern trade system on other countries in Asia and Africa, this never happened in China. ***Instead, two trade systems existed side by side, the traditional one and a modern one centered largely on the foreign treaty ports*** (THEMES 1 and 6).

D. In trying to discover the source of the strength and success of the West, the Chinese applied their own basic ideas to the interpretation of Western concepts: "democracy" was understood as a highly developed form of individual respect for the state, and "human rights" were understood as the state's bestowing on every individual, not just officials, the responsibility to speak up on behalf of the welfare of the people and to insist on the moral uprightness of the rulers (THEME 5).

5. Revolution and War

A. The combination of internal upheaval and foreign aggression led to the ***collapse of the Qing (Ch'ing) or Manchu dynasty in 1911*** and calls for the establishment of a republic (THEME 1). Sun Yat-sen led the forces calling for a republican government and established the Kuomintang (KMT) or Nationalist Party in 1912. The collapse of the dynastic system ushered in the turbulent "warlord period," however, with regional power centers competing for control. The country was partially reunited under the army of Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Party in 1928, but it was invaded by Japan in 1937 and subsequently engulfed by ***World War II***.

B. In the 1920s some Chinese found in Marxism an explanation for China's subjugation by the imperialist powers, a scientific method to achieve economic prosperity for all, and a means of defeating the imperialist powers through a revolution led by the working class (THEME 1). The Chinese Communist

Party (CCP) was formed in 1921. During the Japanese occupation, the CCP established rural (as opposed to urban) bases in peasant areas, following the Long March of 1935-36 into the remote mountainous area of Yenan. The CCP gained strength by calling for united resistance against the Japanese and experimenting with land reform and other policies to ease the plight of the peasants.

C. After W.W. II ended with the defeat of Japan in 1945, a ***civil war*** continued between the Nationalists and the Communists over the right to lead China's political and economic development and to reestablish China's position in the world. On October 1, 1949, the Chinese Communist Party, under the leadership of Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Nationalist government evacuated to the island of Taiwan, where it established the Republic of China (ROC).

III CONTEMPORARY CHINA

[Suggested Time: 4-6 lessons]

1. China Since 1949

A. Since 1949 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), as a single party, has exercised authoritarian power, making policy and controlling all state functions; party organizations exist in every social institution of any importance at all levels of society. Membership is selective and provide benefits in the form of access to scarce goods, housing, power, status, and information. The party has evolved from an organization of revolutionaries committed to an ideology (a vanguard party) (**THEME 4**) to an organization of the privileged whose membership brings material gain, and whose proclaimed ideology justifies its monopoly of power.

B. The policies of the CCP have been directed at meeting the ***two central challenges*** facing China in the 20th century: ***economic development*** and modernization to benefit the world's largest population (**THEME 2**), and the ***reestablishment of China's position and identity as a world leader.*** (**THEME 1**).

C. From 1949 to 1976 the personality and policies/ideas of Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), chairman of the CCP, dominated China's development effort. Ever since his death in 1976, new policy experiments have been undertaken to spur economic development. Among these has been the "open-door" policy of increased economic and cultural interaction with Europe, the United States, and Japan, a departure from the policy that had prevailed for three decades of limiting China's participation in the world economy.

2. Maoist Policies

A. Mao Zedong laid great stress on the need to adapt Marxism, a Western ideology, to the Chinese context (**THEME 1**); this led to the development of "Maoism" or "Mao Zedong Thought."

B. The Chinese belief in the perfectibility of man through education, self-cultivation, and the moral example of rulers was reflected in the CCP style of rule under Mao: party members, steeped in ideology, were meant to lead by their personal commitment and moral example (**THEME 4**). Mao's philosophy was particularly evident in the treatment of those who deviated from party policy: if anyone strayed from the party line, a "struggle" would be undertaken to reform and return the "deviant" to what was viewed as a

useful role in society. "Rectification campaigns" and "criticism/self-criticism" meetings were used to convince people of the error of their opinions (THEMES 4 and 5).

C. The Chinese belief in man's perfectibility through education might also be seen in Mao's belief that by participating in the revolutionary struggle, the peasantry could become the key element in the Chinese revolution. This contrasted with the orthodox Marxist view that urban workers, the proletariat, were central to the revolution, but it was appropriate to China's situation as a predominantly peasant society (THEMES 1 and 4). Mao disparaged pure book learning, however, and emphasized education through practice.

D. Also in contrast with orthodox Marxist theory, Mao believed that man could overcome objective conditions and accomplish things by sheer force of will (or "***voluntarism***") as depicted in the traditional Chinese fable of "The Foolish Old Man Who Moved the Mountains," which he cited. This has led to tension between being "***red***" (i.e., politically, and by extension, morally cultivated) and being "***expert***" (i.e. having scientific, technical, or intellectual expertise). This conflict became particularly acute during The Great Leap Forward (1958-1960) and the Cultural Revolution (1968-76), when Mao encouraged "de-professionalization" and "de-urbanization" of industry and in lieu of formal education, sent students to the countryside to live with and learn from the peasants, who were idealized as the source of revolutionary zeal. Party members, whose qualifications were primarily political, had authority over experts, such as factory managers and school principals, reflecting again the Chinese notion that moral qualities, not technical expertise, ultimately benefit society (THEME 4).

3. Policy Changes Since Mao

A. Following Mao's death a new approach to economic development was espoused by China's leaders under Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-p'ing). Market mechanisms and material incentives are gradually replacing state control and moral exhortation as techniques for managing the economy, and there is greater interaction with international markets (THEME 6). Foreign investment is welcomed and China's provinces, particularly in the coastal area, are vying to compete with the other newly emerging economic powers in Asia – Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

B. China occupies the ***third largest land area*** in the world (surpassed only by the Soviet Union and Canada), with the world's ***largest population*** (THEME 2), estimated at approximately 1.1 billion people in 1989, or approximately 1/5 of the entire world's population. Population control has become a central element in China's economic development policies, in the recognition that continued growth could negate any gains made in this area and would impose impossible demands on the government's plans to provide adequate food, housing, education and health care.

C. As of 1990, approximately 800 million people were employed in agriculture and 200 million in the urban sector. The goal is a reversal of this 4:1 ratio by the 21st century, with 80% of the population employed in industry and services – a social and economic transformation of major proportions.

4. Agrarian Policy and Economic Development

A. In order to achieve economic modernization, the government that came to power in 1949 had to find a way to squeeze the very small surplus out of the countryside (where 80% of the population lived) and invest it in industry (THEME 2). Leaving it to the market was seen as slow, inefficient and inequitable, so ***the commune system of collectivized agriculture was implemented.*** Property was pooled to form large tracts of land that could be farmed more efficiently; land was owned jointly by large groups of peasants who by sheer force of human labor rather than relying on state investment, would together carry out projects of land

reclamation and water control. They were rewarded for their communal labor by a system of work points, while the state exacted as much surplus as possible for investment in industrial development. Families were given only very small plots for their personal farming, and markets for the sale of rural produce were limited mostly to the exchange of goods among local residents. Although the commune system did allow the state to extract the maximum surplus from the countryside, at times it was disastrous, resulting in widespread famine, particularly during 1959-62 at the end of the Great Leap Forward. It was ultimately judged inefficient and having major disincentive effects, and was abandoned in the early 1980s.

B. China continues its efforts to maximize agricultural output while controlling population: it feeds approximately 1/5 of the human race on only 7% of the world's arable land; with a population five times that of the United States, it has only half as much land suitable for farming. Under agricultural reforms instituted in the 1980s, ***farming is now contracted to individual peasant families*** who are encouraged to increase output through market incentives. The simultaneous expansion of rural industry is designed to absorb agricultural labor, made available with the introduction of efficient techniques of production, and to provide additional sources of income. Farmers are encouraged to cultivate larger tracts of contiguous fields to improve efficiency. Emphasis on population control is closely related to these policies. The new agricultural policies have been successful in raising output, but ***the return to family farming works against population control*** (THEME 2).

C. Another reason for the success of China's economic reforms of the 1980s in raising output is the almost instantaneous ***re-emergence of the traditional Chinese market system*** (THEME 6). Local periodic markets, free markets, the use of brokers, local forms of credit, networks of "merchants" and handicraft producers have all reappeared beside the large-scale state-run industries, the smaller rural cooperative industries, and the dynamic, fast-growing sector of small private enterprise. Even local towns are growing and becoming more prosperous as the government once again permits those in rural areas to move to cities or at least to towns. (Permanent migration to large cities is still prohibited for fear of losing an agricultural work force and to avoid the difficulty of feeding a large urban population).

5. The Family and State in China Today

Family

A. ***The family unit persists as the primary unit of social and economic organization in China*** (THEME 3), despite periodic attempts by the government to incorporate family enterprise into larger socio-economic units, such as communes. As noted above, recent economic reforms have actually reinforced the traditional importance of the family as an economic unit. This creates problems for birth control programs, as rural families want more children to work the family plots and as people still want sons who will continue the family line and provide ritual sacrifices to parents after they die. Economic liberalization has brought a return to large expenditures for funerals and other family-centered ritual events. Marriage, while now often initiated by the couple, remains a family affair; divorce is discouraged and mediation to resolve marital discord is stressed (THEME 3).

State

B. The ***persistence of the ideal of state management of society*** presents a potential obstacle to development. Government is still viewed as responsible for people's welfare and for solving people's problems (THEME 3). Mao's concern with grain production and procurement, to insure adequate supplies to feed the entire population, was in part responsible for economic dislocation and famines in the 1960s. (The requirement of regional self-sufficiency in grain resulted in its being grown in areas more suited to producing commercial crops). Fears of grain shortages are reflected in the state's determination to maintain grain quotas and in demands for regional self-sufficiency.

C. State control of industrial development and state regulation of prices are supported by the structure of Chinese economic and political life and are difficult to change. State control of prices impedes the free market reforms, however. Artificial prices are set for agricultural products to keep food prices in cities low. This discourages farmers from growing more crops. It also helps create a dual economy, one in which goods are available cheaply in state store and one in which farmers sell independently on the streets. At the same time, a reluctance to tax the rural populace leaves local government, as in the past, without adequate funding and is partly responsible for the rise in corruption today.

6. Individual and Group

A. The individual's position within the ***group***, whether family or work unit, remains important (**THEME 5**). In urban areas, most people are assigned to a ***work unit*** (factory, office, school) by the government. People rarely change work unit, usually remaining in the same work place for the rest of their lives. If a person does find another job, in most cases permission to change must be obtained from the old work unit. Work unit officials keep employee dossiers in which they record personal and political information, adding to them as they see necessary. If the individual is transferred, so is the dossier.

B. A work unit identity card is the basic form of adult identification, like a driver's license in the U.S. It establishes the person's right to reside in the city of employment, (one must be registered in order to establish legal residence in a Chinese city). The larger cities, where life is more comfortable, are generally closed to new permanent residents, although a work unit may arrange a transfer for a spouse or child to come to live in the city with one of its employees.

C. Work units provide most housing in China, which is very scarce in urban areas. With an average of 6 square yards of housing space per capita, the demand for a larger or better apartment is great. As of the late 1980s, a very small real estate market in apartments and houses was beginning in China, but urban housing remained primarily in government control, apportioned through work units. Young people usually cannot get married until they get an apartment. In order to get on the waiting list early, many register their marriage with the government but do not actually live together as husband and wife until they are assigned an apartment.

D. Work units also provide meal services, health care, recreational programs; distribute certain kinds of consumer items or foods that are expensive or hard to buy; usually provide private bus transportation to and from work and sometimes maintain their own guest houses; provide letters of introduction that enable the bearer to buy scarce airplane or train tickets in comfortable sections. Leaders of work units often get involved in the personal life of their employees: they provide advice on marriage partners (and in some cases strongly discourage or refuse to allow a marriage to be registered); counsel those seeking a divorce, and usually encourage them to try to work things out; mediate in cases of juvenile delinquency among young employees or older employees' children. Work units usually assume responsibility for ensuring that the children of employees find employment, often establishing a subsidiary unit such as a transportation service or a repair shop, to provide employment.

E. Because the workplace provides so many important services, workers tend to stay in the same job, no matter how dissatisfied they are. As a result, work unit leaders have a great deal of power over them, an especially onerous situation during political campaigns prior to the 1980s, when the party dictated that its organizations in work units target people for political harassment. It has also led to serious problems of low morale and inefficiency. No matter how poor their performance, workers are almost never fired. Thus, to have a job is to possess an ***"iron rice bowl."*** Under the economic reforms of the 1980s, the government began experiments with the labor market and gave managers some rights to fire workers in an effort to raise productivity and crack the "iron rice bowl" mentality.

F. Since many desirable items and services are in scarce supply in China – access to better schools, consumer goods, housing, jobs, supplies or raw materials for businesses and factories – the cultivation of personal ***connections***, or ***guanxi (kuan-hsi)***, reflecting the traditional Confucian emphasis on personal rule, continues to be important.

7. State and Society: Democracy and Centralism

A. By reinterpreting Western ideas, the transitional thinkers of the late 1800s and early 1900s left for later generations an ***unresolved tension between democracy and centralism***. Basically, this dilemma is whether democratic rights and other human rights are valuable only to the extent that they help individuals to serve the state (**THEME 5**), or whether it is also legitimate for the individual to exercise these rights for his own benefit. Some Chinese argue that if the latter is not permitted, the former cannot be achieved.

B. The Chinese must address the question of how their understanding of democratic values and human rights fits into the international dialogue. The official position in China is that Western-style "bourgeois" democracy is false and delusionary: only "socialist" democracy is authentic, in the sense that it is founded on a true unity of interests among all citizens and between citizens and the state (**THEMES 3 and 5**). But there is a strong popular and reformist view in the PRC today that the official version of democracy is a hollow shell, merely a rationalization for one-party dictatorship or the dictatorship of a strong personality, while the true Chinese democratic ideal of all the citizens pulling together for the welfare of the entire nation (**THEME 5**) can only be achieved if the citizenry enjoys real freedoms, as in the West.

C. The official position is that human rights are granted and limited by the state in accord with national conditions so as to maintain an orderly process of development; the dissident and reform view is that Western-style freedoms are a universally valid claim of the individual against the state which must be protected, and that to do so ultimately fosters political stability and economic growth.

8. China's Cultural Identity: Defining What it Means to be Chinese

A. The Chinese continue to wrestle with the question of what is it that makes them Chinese: ***how can they modernize without losing sight of their traditional values and their national identity?*** Does modernization mean Westernization (**THEME 1**)? Throughout the country, social and political groups have had different opinions on this, leading to internal conflicts between pro- and anti-Westerners; cries of "spiritual pollution" resulting from Western influence continue to be heard.

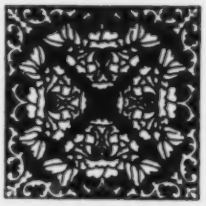
B. The view that China's heritage itself was the major obstacle to economic development and modernization was given cataclysmic expression in the Cultural Revolution of 1968-76, especially at its height in 1966-67, when old books were burned, cultural relics destroyed, and all traces of "Confucian thought" denounced. In the 1980s a ***reevaluation of China's cultural and historical traditions was embarked upon*** (**THEME 1**).

C. The economic reforms of the 1980s have led to disagreement among those who favor the "open-door" policy of contact and economic exchange with the West and those who fear the "spiritual pollution" and "bourgeois liberalization" of social and economic values that have accompanied economic exchange with the West. Just as in the late 1800s, three positions can be discerned among the Chinese leaders: 1) a "neo-traditional" interpretation of Marxism that contains many traditional Chinese values (deference to seniors, paternalistic government, economic self-sufficiency, a Chinese-centered rather than cosmopolitan culture); 2) complete Westernization, including the abandonment of socialism and Marxism (since it is illegal to voice these ideas openly, it is difficult to gauge the strength of this opinion), a position held mainly by younger

people and reformers; 3) adoption of Western technology and managerial methods, while attempting to isolate these elements culturally. The idea of a "Chinese-style socialism" represents this desire to adopt all that is useful from the West while still retaining a distinctive, and indeed superior, Chinese cultural identity (THEME 1).

IV ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

This topic is not given a separate status. Instead, economic issues are integrated into each of the other topical sections.



V CHINA IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

[*Suggested time: 1-2 lessons*]

A. China's traditional self-image as a universalistic civilization and a world cultural center has made it difficult to forge an identity in a world of nation-states. Against this background, Chinese intellectuals and political leaders have debated the question of how China is to view itself: as a member of the socialist world, the third world, or the Western-oriented international trading society that encompasses Europe, the Americas, Japan and the rest of the Pacific Rim. This is not an either-or choice necessarily, but there has been discussion and disagreement within China over what its strategic stance should be as it forges a new identity as a nation-state in an increasingly interdependent world (THEME 1).

B. China, with its large population and massive resource-rich territory, is potentially a great power. Within the United Nations, China is one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. For ideological as well as economic reasons, however, since the early 1960s the Chinese have preferred to align themselves rhetorically with the poorer countries of the third world and to distance themselves from the two superpowers, although by the late 1980s, China's relations with both the United States and the Soviet Union had substantially improved.

C. Within the Pacific region, China is potentially a major economic and political force. Its relations with Japan, Korea, and its southeast Asian neighbors, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines, will be determined by how they perceive this power will be used.

D. By the late 1980s Japan had become China's primary trading partner and source of foreign investment. The Chinese remain sensitive to Japanese atrocities committed in China during W.W.II, but the two countries share a long history of cultural interchange and commonalities.

E. After decades of strained relations, trade, cultural and educational exchange between the United States and China are increasing. Although both countries agree that Taiwan is part of China, the United

States has long supported the Nationalist party government on Taiwan and insists that reunification with the mainland should be achieved by peaceful means; China maintains that this is an internal matter to be settled by the Chinese themselves and protests the continuing U.S. commitment to preventing military attack on Taiwan. Having experienced foreign encroachment and intrusion in their internal affairs from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, the Chinese remain sensitive to any perceived challenges to their national sovereignty.

China's Dynasties

			Capitals
1200	1122?	Shang	Zhengzhou/ Chengchow
			Anyang
		Zhou/Chou	
600		Confucius	
		Warring States	
	221	Qin/Ch'in	Xi'an/Sian
	206	unification	
B.C./ A.D.		Han	Xi'an
		Confucianism est'd.	Loyang
	222		
		Six Dynasties	
		central govt. decline	
		buddhism intro'd.	
600	589	Sui	Chang'an (Xi'an)
	618	second unification	
		Tang/T'ang	Chang'an
	907		
		Song/Sung	Kaifeng
	1127	Northern Song	
1200		Southern Song	Hangzhou/ Hangchow
	1279	Yuan (Mongols)	Beijing
	1368		
		Ming	Nanjing
			Beijing
	1644		
1800		Qing/Ch'ing (Manchus)	Beijing
	1912	Republic	Nanjing
2000	1949	People's Republic	Beijing

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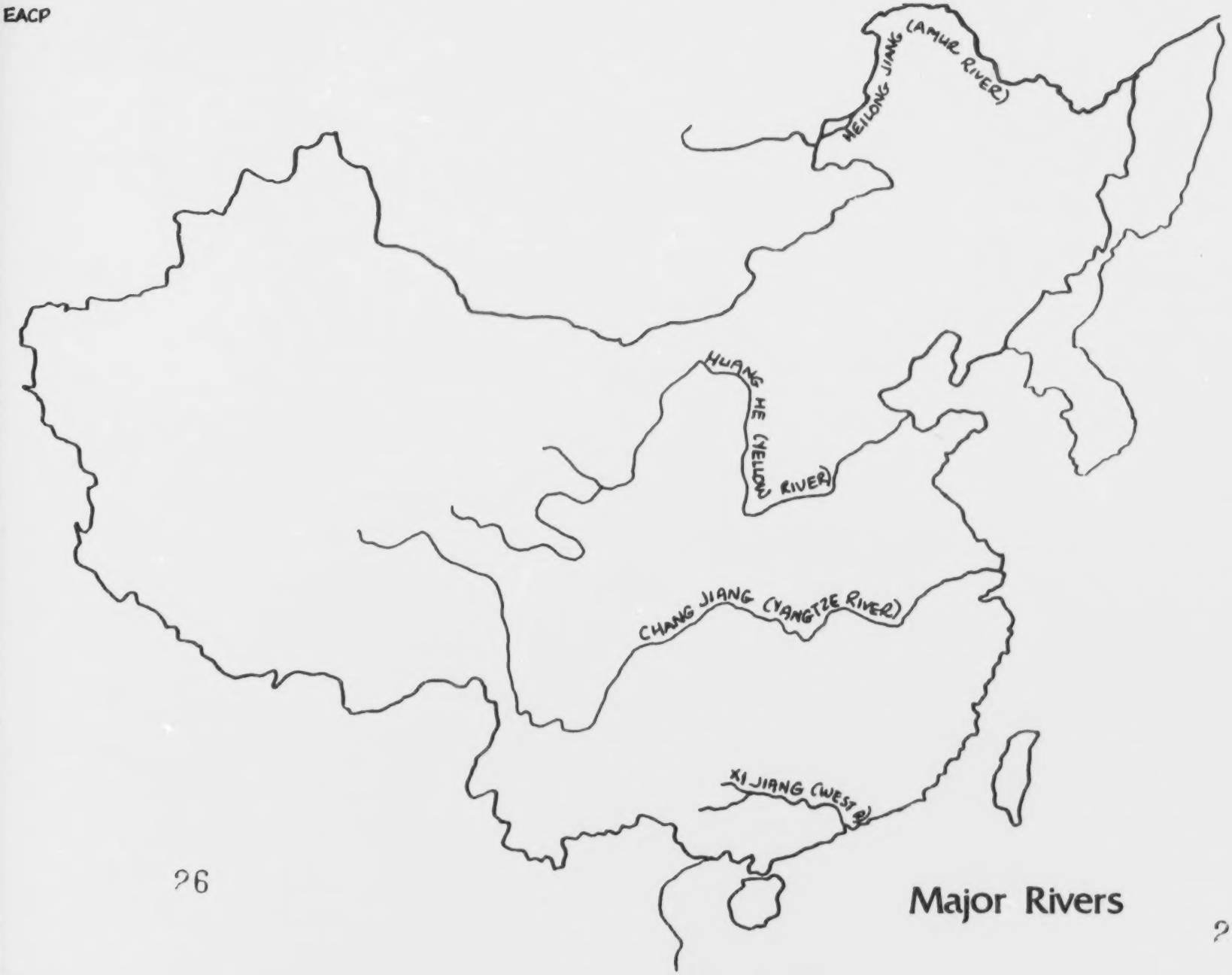

Major Rivers

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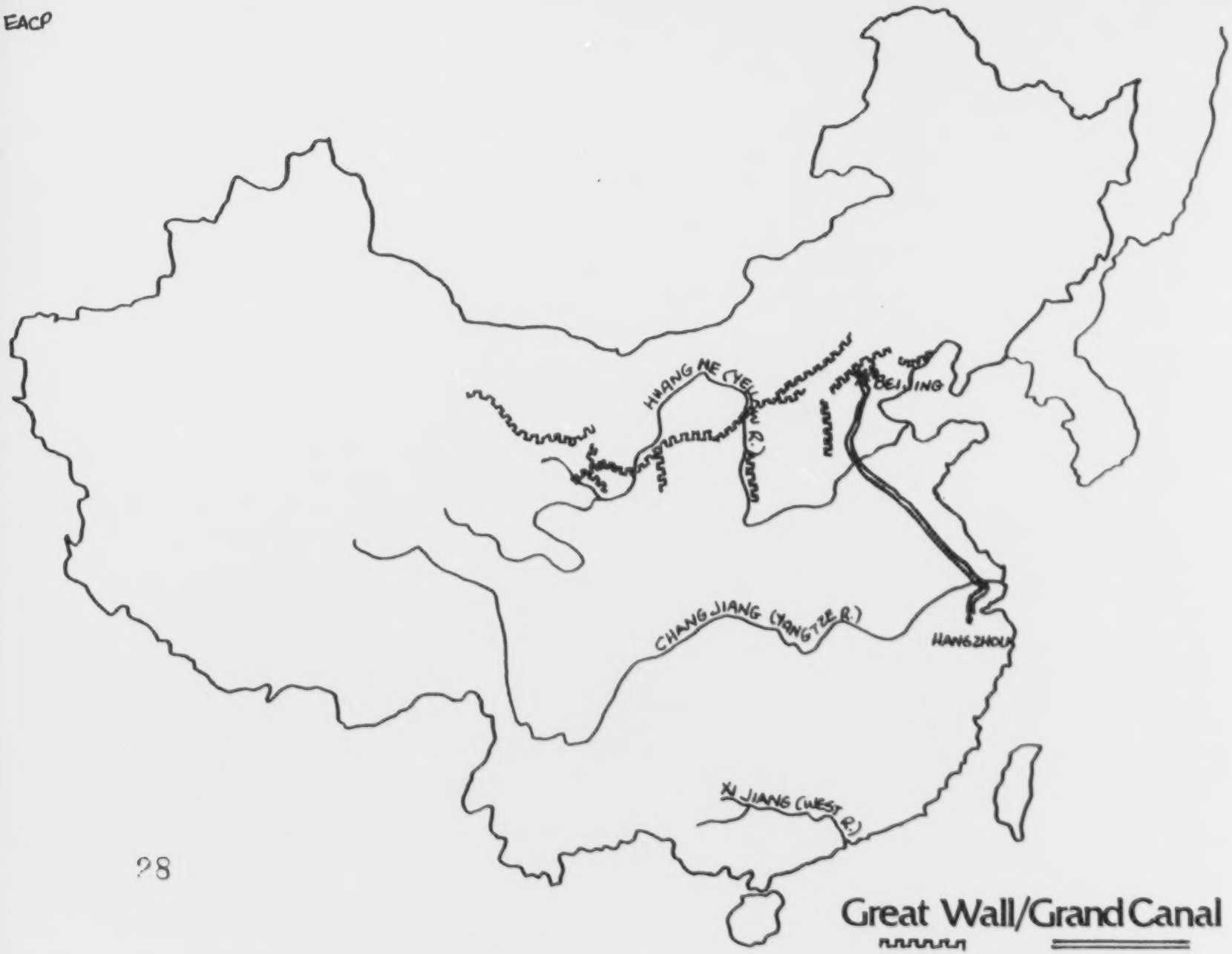

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Great Wall/Grand Canal

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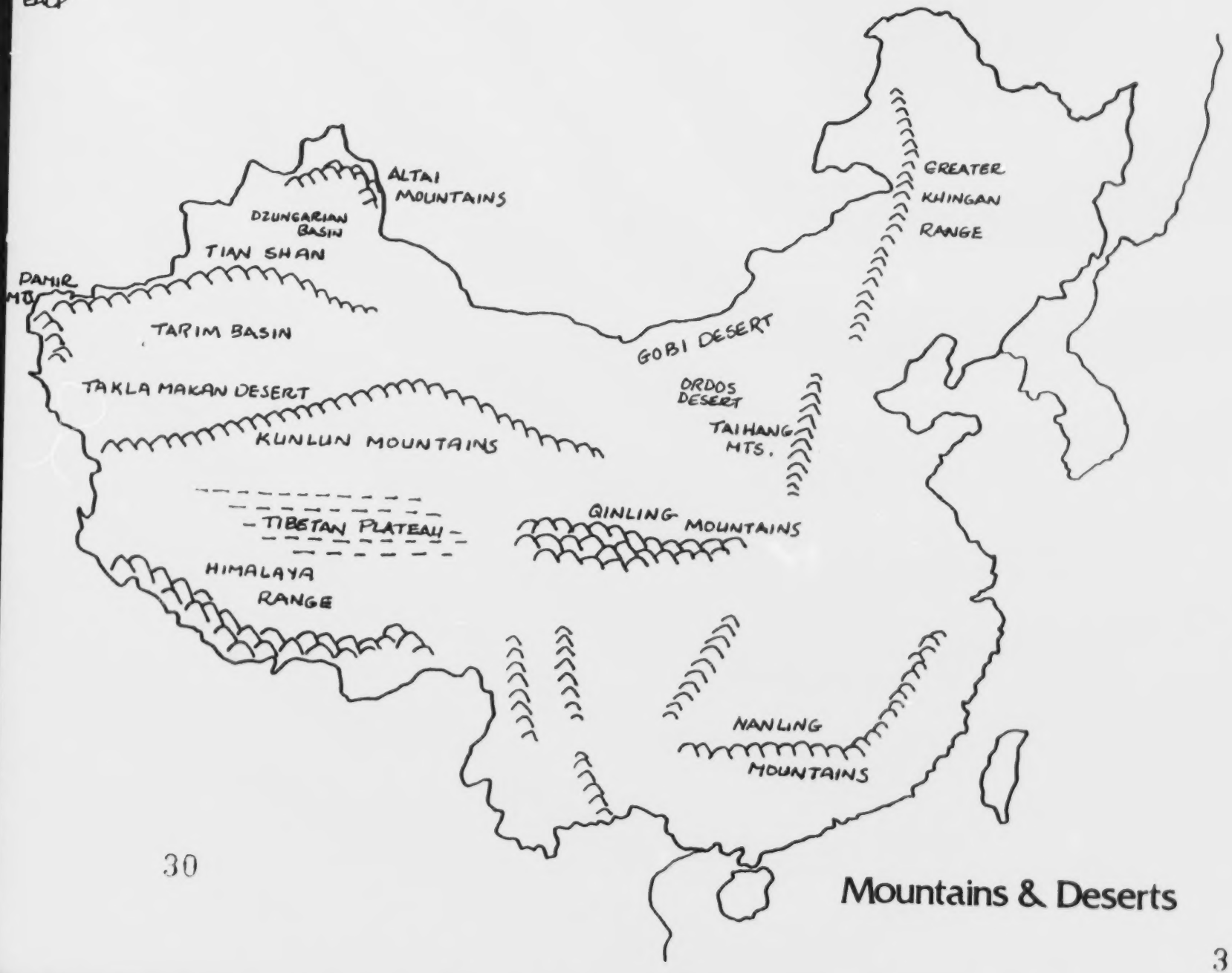

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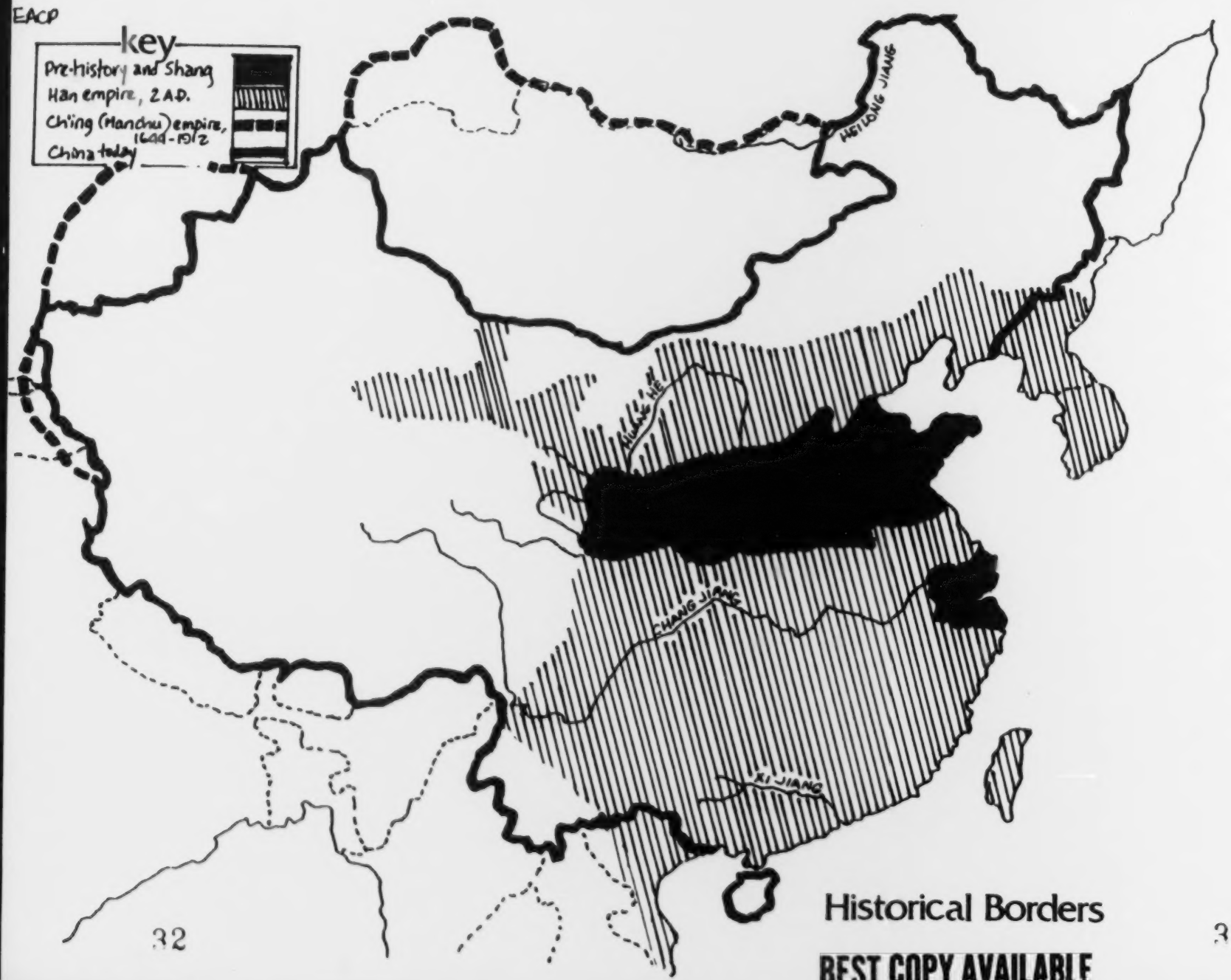
Mountains & Deserts

31



Historical Borders

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Population Density

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Political Divisions

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